

House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

REP. CAFERO, REPUBLICANS, ADD SCHOOL MONEY FOR NORWALK



HARTFORD – State Rep. Lawrence F. Cafero Jr. of Norwalk led a successful effort in redirecting additional education money for Norwalk schools and other priority systems when an attempt to dump \$6 million more in state aid into Hartford, New Haven and Bridgeport was defeated late Monday night.

Cafero, the Deputy House Republican Leader, said a plan hatched behind closed doors by leaders would have given all the additional money to the state's three largest cities at the expense of the so-called Priority School systems, including Norwalk. Norwalk will receive \$2.4 million, nearly \$350,000 more in school aid under the Priority School District formula.

“In the late stages of the legislative session all kinds of bad legislation can surface. I’m just glad we were able to step in and spread the additional priority money around so that Norwalk and other equally deserving communities receive a greater share of state aid,” Cafero said.

Word of the effort began to spread around late Monday while the House was debating the massive state education bill. Cafero led the charge to change the funding formula and that was negotiated into the final version of the bill with Democratic support.

Cafero noted that while the three largest cities comprise just 12 percent of all the students in public schools they already receive about 29 percent of state education aid. “Cities and towns across Connecticut get short-changed because the big three cities get so much aid. I’m working hard to change that,” Cafero said. There are 16 towns and cities included in the priority formula.

The legislature must adhere to the state constitution and finish its work in the regular session by midnight Wednesday May 3. Cafero said that since the budget has already been passed the focus in the last few days will be on the so-called implementation bills such as the education measure that will implement the \$16 billion budget that Gov. M. Jodi Rell has promised to sign.

“There is still a lot of work that remains and I’m confident that we can finish on time,” he said.